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GENERAL OFFICE - 1000 2nd Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.
DISTRICT OFFICE - 1001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.
Telephone X-4346

REPLY TO DISTRICT OFFICE
20734

November 18, 1965

Dear Mr. Miller,

It was kind of you to interrupt your own busy life to answer my letter and to give a little thought to what I face.

I suppose that in part what I had in mind was the hope that among those few members of the intellectual community in our country ~~there might~~ ~~be some~~ who have had the courage to speak out against the evil they see there might be some not already too busy and yet willing to interest themselves in the situation of my book for two major reasons: it documents the dishonesty of the government when it wants to misinform the people, and it raises a different aspect of freedom of the press.

Public opinion is formed by information. When that information coming from the government is false, as, for example, most of what is being said today about foreign policy, the basis of a democratic society is corrupted. Government propaganda becomes a vehicle for perpetuating wrong policies. Few among the citizens have the time or capacity to analyze for themselves what they are told, and even fewer among the press have the disposition to do so. In time the government and the people - today the world - become the creatures of this monster.

With foreign policy, with allegedly factual reports of events and battles, the long continuity of this policy and these events together with their complexity and our personal detachment from them make it difficult if not impossible for the truth to emerge.

But with the investigation of the assassination of a President, with the printed words comprehensible and at hand, it is quite possible to show, as I did, that the government was willing to lie, that it did lie, and there was no accident in it. One of the major publishers who read, praised and rejected my book told me that if it had been less indisputable they would have been more willing to print it. In short, I am suggesting that my book accomplishes in part what you and others are seeking to do with your protests (with which I am in entire accord and more, plan several books on which I have done a considerable part of the research).

And what becomes of freedom of the press if publishers do what the Constitution prevents the government from doing? Who is spreading the misinformation that makes wrong policies acceptable to at least a very large part of the electorate? The government can initiate it, but the press spreads it, persuades with it and, in effect, has become an agent of the government in so doing.

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I have taken the time to write you, even if in too much haste after my return from the most recent trip (where I again found editors interested and left copies with them), because I believe you might be interested in the facts. I apologize for the additional imposition on your time.

While I doubt very much if the book will be printed on your return, should you be interested in reading it, I'll be happy to provide a copy. If you have any other suggestion, I'd certainly welcome them.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg